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The OPA Complex

THE OPA "interval" seemed to be about ended as the last week of July came along. Experience of the month without OPA ought to calm down some of the doctrinaire hysteria and self-blinded certainty that has increasingly corrupted the partisan contestants in the social-economic-political controversies raging around the sign of the OPA—but it doubtless won't; general partisan rage is too obviously in a period of powerful upswing.

Otherwise, it would be most interesting to have a really objective and scientific study of the OPA interim, in an effort to discover and value the public and private forces which govern prices and the relation of prices to other economic items, like wages, profits, production, etc., etc. From the amateur's seat, the OPA issue looks most wondrously impure because certainly OPA laws or lack of laws are only one of very many very powerful influences upon your living and luxury costs and your living or luxury real income. About the one sure thing to do is to shake the head with complete scepticism when a fanatic begins to talk

about OPA laws (plus or minus) righting or ruining the American economy and/or the people's welfare.

The OPA fall-down at the end of June was one step in many which American price control has been taking on the way out since the end of the war. The legal breakdown followed a pretty general and serious administrative collapse. The OPA itself, Chester Bowles and all, was quite busy through spring raising ceilings over one commodity after another. Rationing, the rational and ordering arm of a serious price control effort, had gone out the window. The black market was enormous and its demoralizing reputation still greater.

And the legal retirement of OPA by no means ushered in a test period of non-controlled pricing and economic effort. We were not operating then in any approach to a "free economy" system, which state planners will be strongly tempted to say if economic chaos develops. So far, there is no way to say just what particular laws or lack of laws, or particular business and government practices actually are the cause of jumped prices, present or to come. As for the relation of wages and prices, one is reminded of the old tariff question (Where, by the way, has the tariff debate gone?): did it cause the "American standard of living," or did the high standard win through despite the high tariff? You might go back still further to the chicken and egg.

There are, in any case, other control factors involved which the government exerts and which "business" and "labor" exert. The OPA, as a tool to check prices and inflationary disaster, is pretty thoroughly washed up legally and administratively and propagandistically (this goes no matter what Congress and the President will finally have decided)—a "bad" and dangerous thing. The other means available to prevent inflation, "boom and bust," social disorder, national governmental weakness and other evils must be examined, coordinated, strengthened and put into rational operation. The federal government and the states, counties, cities and rest have the tax structure, budgets, debt systems, methods of finance, credit policies, "sumptuary" laws and profit ceilings, foreign loans and shipments, anti-trust acts and many other means to work with. In most of these categories, business and labor also have initiative and responsibility, and they are the "contract makers" of overwhelming influence.

Philip Murray's call for a new Labor-Management Conference should not be sneered out of possibility because of the sad experience of the first post-war effort along that line. The invitation should be developed into an agenda which would include genuine, definable social and economic purposes. It should not be permitted to

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grow as a means of irresponsible delay and a forum of insincere propaganda to advertise partisan lies and half truths at the expense of the common peace and justice. Such a conference can be a beautiful escape for incompetent and morally weak self-deceivers who refuse to face facts; and it can be an opportunity for creative and honest leaders.

The "buyers' strikes," which so far are much more publicity than actuality, are speculatively the most fascinating weapon against runaway prices. So far, the buyers' strike talk is a crude propaganda weapon of primarily political import, and played up most shrilly in a proprietary and general smear manner by such as the *Daily Worker*. But the buyers' strike ought to be and could be a most useful activity of those who protest against the very roots of the current materialistic fever which spreads a blind kind of lust for commodities which are not actually essential to a good life, but are distractions and in large measure luxuries and superfluities. It could be a vote against the commonly accepted theory—upheld by reactionary capitalist and by revolutionary communist—that all the real problems can be solved by more and more and more production of material commodities. That is a false and divisive theory, and following it to the extremes demanded now is bound to lead to social strife and frustration and to the indefinite delay of peace.

The Bomb in Jerusalem

IT WILL be said, of course, that we like the Jews best when they are persecuted, when they are suffering, that we write best about them when they are wandering homeless because then we can use the passage about the endless roads of the world with the Jews measuring them more accurately than any peasant can measure them. The peasant goes from village to village—with the church spire in the distance over the plain—while for the Jews there is no village in which to rest (no inn), and they proceed endlessly along the roads finding no home in which ever to rest. It will be said, bitterly, that Christians have created a magnificent and poetic image of the Jews, a mystery play in which the Jews act out interminably the rôle of their distress—admirable in that rôle, indispensable, irreplaceable—cast in that rôle throughout the centuries so that Christians can look at them, and meditate upon the mystery of suffering. But no matter what is said we must write what we must write about the bomb in Jerusalem.

It was set off by extremists, of course, unauthorized by responsible Zionist leadership. Yet for weeks now American papers have carried full page advertisements inciting hatred against the British, and in this issue of THE COMMONWEAL

Mr. J. L. Teller describes "Haganah," the official resistance organization, and shows clearly that Zionist nationalism has been drifting more and more toward violence.

It is Zionism inescapably that must now bear responsibility for an act which threatens to ruin all that it ever aimed to create. This bomb with the violence that preceded it, the violence that will follow, threatens to end the dream of a pacific homeland for those Jews—never in contemporary times a majority of the Jews—who desire to live apart from other nations in a nation of their own.

We have always had sympathy with that desire, with the great and generous efforts made by many Jews throughout the world to give it form and reality. Also we have always thought that the Palestine plan was something special, something apart, which concerned some Jews but not our attitude toward the position all Jews should and must have in all countries wherever they are, all over the world—a position of complete equality, of complete citizenship, of unassailable brotherhood.

No bomb anywhere will change our attitude toward Jews anywhere. That is why we do not conceal our anger and our distress now that a long and mistaken campaign has brought one more bitter nationalism into a world that has too many of them.

Nationalization

THE CENTRAL difficulty confronting the economic reformer or revolutionary of today is in reality the difficulty which should have been central throughout the whole debate—from the time when emergent capitalism first attracted the attention of thinking men because of its inevitable conflicts with the equally strong humanitarian currents coeval with it, not to mention its conflicts with such older concepts as the natural law and the limited notion of property rights prevalent up to the time of the industrial revolution. This difficulty—perhaps the central difficulty in any social organization of mankind, but taking different forms and a different historical dress—is the difficulty of the concentration of power.

The thing which the nineteenth century made possible in connection with power was a degree and a perfection of concentration never before attainable, and this because technological advances coupled with vastly speedier communication all tended to buttress power and shoehorn it into larger and larger units. In simon-pure capitalist economies, this worked in the direction of restricting control over a nation's life to the hands of a very small segment of the nation's people—the industrial and financial élite. In smaller national units, such as Switzerland or

Sweden, this process was somewhat inhibited for purely natural reasons, but in the larger countries it continued to points of crisis, which greatly sharpened and strengthened opposition to all aspects of the dominant economic régime. This opposition, we are inclined to forget, took the greatest conceivable variety of forms, forms bearing various labels: cooperative, socialist, Owenite, Fourierite, corporative, syndicalist, anarchist. But for a number of reasons, some of them historical accidents, the effective opposition progressively crystallized in the direction of Marx. This direction, once the clear conflict between the results of doctrinaire Marxism and the results of a Marxism tempered by historic Western regard for the individual had been varyingly brought into the open, took two roads: what might be called the Scandinavian-Anglo-Saxon road and what is now the highly unitary road we call communism.

Over both roads hovered for a long time a single pink cloud of panacea: nationalization. Evil, in a very Rousseauistic conception, resided in the modern power-equivalents of priests and kings; i.e., in the owning class. Therefore evil might be exorcised by either eliminating or taming this class, and the immediate means of effecting this was to hand over to the state (as corporate embodiment of the Nation, of the people, and therefore of the good) all the means of production important enough to be sources of power. What had been forgotten was that the enemy, the evil, in human nature simply does not lie with small categories of men and women, to the exclusion of all evil and the inclusion of all good in the rest of the human race, but lies in the amalgam of man or woman with power. Now, in the face of Russia and in the badly battered faces of Italy, Germany and Japan, this truth has begun to emerge for all of us—except those of us still infatuated with the Kremlin. Libertarian socialists even more than the broad, unreflective mass of other non-communists have been deeply worried about the problem which at last they see as the emergent problem, the problem of power.

The Church, as a formal body of dogma and teaching relating to life in this world, has known enough about man's nature always to be fearful of centered power, however much it may occasionally and most humanly hope to reap the benefits of friendship with this mammon of iniquity. Doctrinally, then, the Church becomes skittish about power, especially when lodged in the state, and although certain forms of nationalization have not only been approved but have been characterized as necessary, the skittishness continues. And probably no one, in his heart of hearts, better appreciates this skittishness than a latter-day socialist confronted with the potentials of tyranny he now sees visibly manifest in straight Marxist doctrine.

Hence it is not surprising that Pius XII should recently have expressed his preference for "corporative associations" rather than nationalization as a means for just social reform. The only regrettable thing is that the word *corporative* should still be used, since it has been—however unfairly—blackened by the bad company it has kept. Perhaps the next time he speaks on this subject, the Holy Father may use a word as clearly indicative of his meaning and yet less likely to raise fur on the cat's back. After all the principal intent in the Pope's advocacy is the avoidance of concentrated power in a new and even more far-reaching form than has ever been possible under capitalism.

Unfortunately the definition of the word "nationalization" itself has fogged over. In its own platform, for instance, the French MRP uses the term in a very different sense from that of Russian communism, since it recognizes a number of forms of nationalization varying from complete state management to cooperative ownership. And the Austrian Christian democrats see nationalization in their country as a necessary interim trusteeship leading to a sort of state-sponsored co-operative régime. In this country more and more opinion favors the public corporation as a way out of the power impasse, especially when the undertaking in question is beyond the capacities of private finance.

The problem, however, remains the same, and however much we may long for the achievement of a terminological understanding, the problem will remain the same. It is the problem of surrounding big power with checks and balances and strait-jackets so that big power, wielded in whomever's hands, does not make life increasingly inhuman and, to use the Pope's adjective, "mechanical."

Trieste

LUIGI STURZO

IT IS HARD to contradict Secretary Byrnes and Senator Vandenberg and affirm that Trieste should not be internationalized. They admit that though the best solution would have been to give it to Italy, they reluctantly accepted internationalization for the sake of compromising with Russia.

I wonder if any intelligent person who has read the many official statements and communiques could have thought that the idea of the internationalization of Trieste came to the four foreign ministers suddenly like a flash of lightning. The fact is that it had been prepared with care. The *mise-en-scène* had been staged. Everyone had the opportunity of washing his hands of the matter, just like Pontius Pilate.

The first act was that of fixing the ethnic line

decided upon at the London Conference last September. But the American-Wilson line was the only *ethnic* line; the three other lines, proposed by each delegation—English, French and Russian—were political lines. No one need think that the French delegate did not understand that the population of Pola and the other border cities and villages is 100 percent Italian. But he nevertheless proposed giving them to Yugoslavia.

Mr. Byrnes was conscious of it; but following his instinct of compromise, he accepted the French line so as to give Trieste to Italy. But once Byrnes had made such an enormous concession, then M. Bidault proceeded to suggest the internationalization, not at all as a French proposal, but as a personal idea. Byrnes and Bevin accepted it "reluctantly" of course; even Molotov was in doubt, but he finally bowed to the will of the majority (he who is always so respectful of majority rule), and thus the solution was reached to the admiration of the world. If I say that this piece of diplomacy is of the same quality as that used in the application of the sanctions against fascist Italy (though approved by the League of Nations, Samuel Hoare and M. Laval devised means of not applying them), many "innocents" in this country will blame me for my disrespectful interpretation of the Paris bargain.

The internationalized city and port of Trieste can expect nothing from Yugoslavia, which has her own large port of Fiume and other minor harbors along the Dalmatian coast. She can expect very little from a disrupted Austria or from other northern provinces around her, not only because of the present economic situation, but also because of the prospect of a large scale bolshevization of the satellite countries. The port of Trieste suffered a real set-back after the first World War because of the economic crises of Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. Since then Yugoslav traffic in the port of Trieste has never surpassed 1.50 percent of the total traffic. The recovery of Trieste and the other Istrian industrial centers was due to the merging of their economy with that of Italy's, thereby avoiding the effects of the inflation of the Austrian "corona" at the expense of the Italian treasury. They also received large commercial credits from Italian banks or through State mortgages; they enlarged the trade markets in Italy; they were helped by the Italian State commissions which gave work to their shipyards, industrial plants for locomotives, airplanes and so on.

The economy of the population of Trieste as a new free State detached from Italy, deprived of the Istrian electric plants and other industries, without the coal mines of the Arsia district, will be almost wiped out. Can Trieste, without American help, reconstruct the San Marco shipyards, the Sant' Andrea vegetable oil mills, the refinery

of Zaule, all of which have been damaged or destroyed by bombardments?

The political instability of Trieste and her zone will prevent any real constructive plan. Mr. Byrnes proposed a revision of her status in due time. Thus, Trieste is deprived of her stability from the beginning. No State, no bank, no commercial firm can trust Trieste.

When I think of such a dreadful affair, I wonder how an American business man, or any American, could have approved the internationalization of Trieste which Secretary Byrnes presents as a fine piece of work. On the other hand, Italy has an incontestable right to Trieste and the other zones of Venezia Giulia.

I do not discuss here her historical, ethnic, economic and political right to retain Istria. It is out of the scope of this article. But it is clear that last September the Four Ministers agreed in principle that the line of demarcation between Italy and Yugoslavia was to be an ethnic line, more or less along the Wilson boundary. If Mr. Molotov has changed his mind, that is no reason for the others to follow. In doing so they permit Mr. Molotov to carry his veto power far beyond its proper limits.

In the case of Trieste, nothing can justify the yielding of Mr. Byrnes and the other two to Molotov other than the fact that the treaty with Italy would have been delayed indefinitely. But just as the Four Ministers agreed to postpone for a year any decision regarding the Italian colonies, so they would have been wise to postpone any decision regarding Trieste. And if Molotov has vetoed the postponement, it would have been better to leave Italy with the provisional peace of the new armistice terms fixed in May than offer her an unacceptable peace treaty.

It is puzzling how Messrs. Byrnes, Bevin or Bidault did not remember the second provision of the Atlantic Charter which governs the Trieste question. It states: "They desire to seek no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned." But Messrs. Byrnes, Bevin and Bidault had no time to read this obsolete Charter. They preferred leaving about 150,000 Italians under the totalitarian state of Yugoslavia without any guarantee of their human rights, obliging them (as is now clear through the press) to abandon their beautiful cities and villages and take refuge in Italy, while the occupying government (Yugoslavia) permits them to take only a very small bag.

The Triestines will remain in their small enclosure. How can we explain the invidious and unfriendly action of Russia in depriving Italy of Trieste? Only one answer can be given to such a query: Russia knows that, through internationalization, she will have a foothold in Trieste. So, step by step, Russia will conquer Western Europe.

The Tools of Jewish Resistance

An intimate report
by a Zionist observer

J. L. Teller

DISPATCHES filed by correspondents who have acquired an amazing omniscience regarding Palestine's problems after a "lost weekend" at the now defunct bar of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem are spiced with esoteric, wonderful names — Haganah, Irgun Zvai Leumi, Lochamei Cheirut Yisroel — and the tongue of Moses and of the ancient Hebrews is lifted out of the Old Testament right into the political argot of today's headlines.

In conformity with the city room dictum to tell everything in terms familiar to the reader back home, correspondents describe the Jewish resistance groups variously as "patriots" and "terrorists," and create belabored analogies by comparing the Jewish fighting groups to the American revolutionists of 1776, to the Irish Republican Army, or to the Chicago gangs. To explain events in Palestine one should first state them in their own terms, for precisely by an examination of those features least analogous to things familiar to them can Americans hope to grasp the meaning behind Palestine's headlines.

I have met the top people and the little men of the Jewish resistance groups in Palestine: the myopic scholarly little fellow, member of the "brains" department of the Jewish resistance movement; the tall, quick-smiling, sprightly-stepping, slightly round-shouldered instructor type, who is a resistance cadre commander; the heavy-jowled, belly-laughing, sybiretic merchant, who is transport commander; and a host of deeply tanned farmers, chauffeurs, longshoremen. They are Haganah, a cross section of its over seventy thousand men and women—an amazing total for Palestine's total Jewish population of 600,000. Besides the seventy thousand mobilized men and women, Haganah counts on thousands of collaborators, including Arabs, in town and village, who fulfil variegated functions ranging from the smuggling of immigrants and gunrunning to intelligence work within government offices.

Haganah means defense. The organization was started in Palestine over a half century ago under the name Shomrim, or "watchman," since the first modern Jewish resettler in Palestine under the anarchic Turkish rule was as dependent on his rifle for survival and security as was the American pioneer in the days of the frontier. The

repeated warnings against Bedouin marauders on Palestine's roads contained in the 1910 Baedeker, and its laconic references to villages where it is safe to spend the night, testify to the condition of law and order in the Palestine of that day.

When the British as mandatory moved into Palestine, the propensity of some of the country's inhabitants for spoils by pillage and the auxiliary taking of human life were as apparent as ever. And when in 1920 a political agitator came along, Haj Amin el Husseini, an ex-officer of the Turkish Army, later Mufti of Jerusalem (and in 1946 an international "issue" enjoying sanctuary in the Royal Palace in Cairo) he took into account these incorrigible free-booters in computing his potential forces for an "Arab revolt," i.e., raids on Jewish colonies. Booty doubtless was still a major consideration with the members of his raiding parties, but the primary concern of their leader was political. He resorted to violence as a means to drive the Jews out of Palestine, to intimidate his Arab political opponents, and to place himself in a strong bargaining position with the British.

It was at this time that Haganah replaced Shomrim. The new group operated on another principle; watchmen might ward off desultory marauders out for booty, but only a large-scale organization comprised of all the defense potentials of Palestine's Jewish settlements could withstand the onslaught of the new politically directed gangs. Haganah's slogan, "Never retreat; resist to the last," was sanctified in blood during 1920 by a recalcitrant group in Tel Hai, a new settlement in the far north, which despite warnings by friendly Arab neighbors and the pleading of Haganah's leaders, held out against attack, although its defenders were terrifyingly outnumbered. Tel Hai paid in casualties of staggering numbers, but it served as a vanguard for the chain of Jewish settlements now covering the northern region of the country.



Then came 1929. Arab units, recruited and led by the Mufti, and better organized than in 1920, unleashed a new campaign of violence which reached its climax in the attack on the Jews of Hebron, a pious community apathetic and even

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hostile to Zionism. The unarmed, politically innocuous students of the Hebron Yeshiva (theological seminary), surprised by the roar of the approaching mob, sought desperately to build a barricade made of their lecterns, but even before they managed to bar the door, they were set upon by Arabs armed with knives who slaughtered them like cattle. The Jews never returned to Hebron. All Jews mourned these dead, but the Zionists grit their teeth in resentment and shame at the unpreparedness of the pious community.

From then on, even the deeply religious began to approve of Haganah, which worked feverishly to stock up arms against a sudden sanguinary tomorrow. That day came in 1936. The well regimented Arab units, reenforced by mercenary recruits from contiguous countries, armed by Italian fascist agents, financed partially by the nazis, trained by Germans of Wilhelmina, a Templar colony, and operating according to a long-range strategy, rarely impinged on the strictly Jewish belt of settlements and directed their attacks mostly on isolated outposts, all of which held out, and sniped on Jewish transportation, which moved on schedule throughout three years of Arab guerrilla warfare. Hardened by this experience under fire, the determined daredevils of the Jewish taxi and bus cooperatives later ferried supplies and reinforcements to stem the sweep of Rommel's forces.

By 1936, the Jewish right to defensive arms was well established with the government, and the authorities knew that the Jews were feverishly accumulating stores of arms exceeding the rigid quota for defense set by the government. Britain's forces in Palestine were small; she was not yet anticipating troop evacuation from Egypt. The Jews complained that the security measures taken by the British were puerile and disproportionate to what the disturbed conditions required. The Jews and Arabs maintained and still maintain that Britain believes in keeping a "margin of unrest" to retain her position as umpire. But when the Jews pressed for more protection, arguing that that is what taxpayers are entitled to, the British assigned a young, brilliant, albeit eccentric captain, Orde C. Wingate, to instruct Haganah in guerrilla tactics so that its men might supplement the British security forces in operations against Arab brigands.

Wingate later conceded that on first inspection, many of his recruits amused him and drove him to mild despair with their unsoldier-like bearing, their squat physique, their short, heavy legs. But in very little time he acquired respect for Haganah and its shock troops whom he gave a name they proudly bore, "Wingate's Night Squads." Palmach, the youthful shock brigades of Haganah, for whom the British are scouring the country in a desperate effort to eradicate them, still operate

along the principles Wingate taught "his boys." Years later, when Wingate drove into liberated Ethiopia alongside Emperor Haile Selassie, his troops, straggling grimly and dust-covered in the victory parade, included some of his Palestinian "Night Squaders." And other night squaders are reported to have been with him in the Burma jungle campaign, which placed his name among the military immortals. When Wingate died in a plane crash in the Burma jungle at forty-one, his death was described by Prime Minister Churchill as a major blow. According to his widow, the General, who had acquired fluency in Hebrew and become a zealot for the Jewish State, had hoped that World War II would bring a Jewish Army into the field with Haganah as its base and him as its commander-in-chief.



The first Palestinian Jewish volunteers with His Majesty's forces in Dunkirk, in Greece and later in Tobruk were men and women of Haganah. The major intelligence and scouting preliminary to the Allied campaign against Vichy Syria was assigned to and executed by members of Haganah, some of whom Britain had released from prison for that purpose, where they had been incarcerated during a lull in the vacillating relations between Haganah and the government.

Many Haganites became professional soldiers during the course of years, although they never severed relations with the agricultural settlements in which they have their homes and families. They became the military training experts of the Jewish community of Palestine.

The Jews are building Palestine as though it already were a Jewish State. The Anglo-American Inquiry Commission intimated that Palestine's Jewish community is a state within a state, its own institutions paralleling the government's. States have armies. Haganah is supposedly the embryo army of the Jewish State. But it prides itself on being a citizen's army embodying the entire population and composed of men who may possess ingenuity, daring and military skill and yet remain hopelessly civilian in their bearing and outlook. On this Haganah prides itself.

There was great resentment among its members in 1936-39 over British orders that Haganah's night squads and Jewish policemen participate in British punitive expeditions against Arab villages. Punitive expeditions are not defense, Haganah men argued.

A primary aim of Haganah, lost sight of in the explosiveness of recent events, has been the facilitation of illegal Jewish immigration. The Jews of Palestine, through Haganah, for many years have engaged in supplementing their "legal immigration," the quotas set by the government, by some measure of "illegal" immigration, at

which the Arabs are equally dexterous. It is a matter of taking the high road and taking the low road; the Arabs have come in from neighboring countries via the land route, and the Jews have entered by the sea lanes of fishermen's small craft.

The termination of the war found the Jews straining more than ever at the leash of the White Paper. With warships in Palestine's territorial waters and prescient radar guarding the shores, the odds against illegal landings grew, as did the hazards of Haganah's sea units specializing in such action. It was then that Haganah sanctioned the use of arms to protect illegal landings. Armed attack was the strategy used in the forcible release of several hundred illegal Jewish immigrants from the Atlith detention camp. Over formidable opposition within its own ranks Haganah carried a motion sanctioning sabotage of government installations which served as deterrents to the landing of Jews. In accordance with this decision, the radar station of Kfar Olga was destroyed twice. Again, over considerable resistance within its ranks, Haganah authorized the blowing up of bridges and railways as token sabotage to warn the British that the Jews would resort to the most desperate methods if the White Paper was continued.

Haganah members, sworn to discipline, cannot balk at the high command's orders. But the execution of commands is followed by sessions at which all details of the operation are discussed at great length, particularly the moral issues involved. Were the casualties, British and Jewish, absolutely inevitable? Haganah expels members found guilty of the reckless use of arms during operations and has given Palestine's coast guard stations a quarter of an hour's notice of impending attacks to give their personnel time to evacuate. Criticism voiced at Haganah's unit "bull sessions" is duly submitted to the high command which later transmits explanations to justify its orders.

The soul-searchings of these Haganah cracker barrel sessions bemuse the novice and he may even carry away a dubious appraisal of Haganah as a fighting force. When a Haganah member takes the floor after a two-hour session again to demand assurance that "my rifle is clean," he refers not to the condition of his gun, but to the use to which he put it at the high command's orders. He must be certain that the use was conscientious and morally clean. Even the underground publications of Haganah, on handbill-sized sheets and posted surreptitiously in the hours past midnight on walls, fences and trees throughout Palestine for early risers to read, reveal this tortuous soul-searching.

As recent events have most amply demonstrated, the Irgun Zvai Leumi and Lochamei Cheirut Yisroel are not subject to these Dostoevieskian spells. The Irgun's estimated four thousand mem-

bers, Lochamei's (Stern Group) three to four hundred, are equally inspired by the European revolutionary and nationalist movements and by Hebrew slogans with profound historical connotation. "In blood and fire Judea has fallen and in blood and fire shall Judea rise," they chant. They believe in attaining Jewish statehood by force.

These two organizations are composed primarily of adolescents, from the economically underprivileged and socially insecure groups. They include city waifs, the sons and daughters of semi-employed families who have lived among the Arabs for centuries, some youthful ultra-orthodox ascetics, with indoor pallor and earlocks, Talmudic and Cabbalistic students from ancient academies where Zionism is anathema to this day, who release their frustration in activism and in mythological rites alien to the Jewish tradition. And in Palestine, the socially insecure are the idle sons and daughters of well-to-do families who feel lost and unchaperoned in this society of co-operatives and labor settlements where a person is judged by his day's work.



Irgun has preached forestalling offensives against the "foes" of the Jewish community in Palestine and has practiced retaliatory measures against the Arabs (as contrasted to Haganah's restraint) and out-and-out warfare against the British for Jewish independence. The Stern Group has advocated the removal by assassination of persons perilous to the Jewish cause in Palestine. Former High Commissioner MacMichael was singled out as such a man. In refusing to review the case of the illegal Jewish immigrants who at his order had been transferred to tropical, malarial Mauritius, he explained that "it isn't that I object to their entering, as that I won't have this round go to the Jewish Agency." Some of these refugees perished as a result of conditions in Mauritius. The Stern Group struck at Sir Harold several days before his departure from Palestine but their attempt failed. Young Sternites, knowing they faced certain death for the assassination of Lord Moyne, British Minister resident in the Middle East and intimate of Prime Minister Churchill, told the court that they were not alone, and that Lord Moyne's fate was an example and warning to all whom the Stern Group regarded as enemies of the Jewish cause. Lord Moyne was alleged to be the author of a plan which called for the complete stoppage of Jewish immigration into Palestine after the admission of a postwar quota of 25,000. The Irgunites and the Sternites, having no support within the community, have resorted to holdups and burglaries to secure funds for the purchase of arms.

Haganah's "subscription list" includes the overwhelming majority of Palestine's Jews. The

wealthy contribute generously, but the workers and the farmers willingly carry the main burden for the maintenance of Haganah. Arms are run across the border, bought from the Arabs, purchased from the deserters of untold armies and brigand forces in the entire Middle East, and manufactured in smithy plants throughout Palestine. But Haganah—whose ranks include Jewish-staters, moderates who advocate a bi-national state of Jews and Arabs, proponents of dominion status for Palestine and supporters of international trusteeship — could not very well entertain plans for an armed revolt against Britain, even if its leaders deluded themselves into the belief that such revolt were feasible. Haganah seeks the abolition of the White Paper and would lay down its arms once its objective is gained. But Haganah is determined to assume the offensive in the event of future Arab disturbances.



In the past Haganah has suppressed the Irgun and the Stern Groups, sometimes by collaborating with the authorities and sometimes by using its own unique methods, which include "quarantining" leaders and thus demobilizing these groups, and blacklisting their members for employment. The Irgun and the Stern Group have announced publicly that they will join with Haganah in laying down their arms, once the admission of the 100,000 Jewish DP's, requested by President Truman, and recommended by the Anglo-American Committee, is begun. They would have no other course than to conform with the policy set down by Haganah, for Haganah can compel them to keep in line. But if Haganah has shown forbearance with the Irgun and the Sternites in recent months, it is because of resentment over the continuation of the White Paper and the consequent repressed desire, common to all Jews in Palestine, for retaliation against the British because of this policy. But even within the ranks of Haganah there are many who denounce this forbearance as "condonance"; they are the same who protest that the blowing up of the radar station was not "defensive," over the contention of Haganah's majority that it was "anticipatory defense" because radar was forewarning the British of the arrival of Jewish vessels.

I have known Palestine's Jewish Resistance Movement for many years. I met its people at the termination of the 1936-1939 disturbances, and I met them again several months ago. In 1939 Palestinian Jews spoke of them with a shy and patronizing pride. Now in 1946, there was hardly a Jew I met who was not involved with Haganah in some way. And Jamal el Hussein, Musa el Alami, Achmed Shukeri and other Arab extremists with whom I talked raged against the Zionists, called down the wrath of the whole

Arab world on the Jews, on Britain and the United States, should the 100,000 Jewish DP's be admitted, but nonetheless betrayed a very apparent respect for Haganah and other Jewish resistance groups and an evident anxiety over retaliatory measures by the Jews.

Incidentally, there has been nothing bizarre about the conditions under which I obtained my information about the Jewish resistance movement. No stunt interviews with masked leaders at the hour when the cock crows, no "cloak and dagger" tapping on my window at midnight, no blindfolds as I was sped to and from unknown rendezvous. I met the leaders at their homes and at their work, casually, undramatically; talked with the farmer as he withdrew to the shade for a mid-day recess after a tedious morning on the flatlands under a parching sun; talked with the cadre commander at a café table in Tel Aviv while the evening crowds paraded; talked with a harassed executive in a cramped dusty office, its files bulging with business correspondence. Ordinary citizens most of them, none of them reckless, and some of them morbidly introspective, prejudging themselves by stern standards in the tradition of an ancient people whose saintliest beat their chests on Atonement Day in penitence for sins which they may have committed unknowingly and of which they might still be ignorant, and in penitence for a roster of the most esoteric transgressions which the lowliest of their number may have committed and for which even the purest of heart must bear the collective guilt.

The Mayflower Was My Ship

I, too, in the pine wood running free,
Running barefoot on the summer loam,
Running, even, from history,
Remember this ship—that she came to my home

And that her people, even as I,
Preferred the cold to the lazy hearth,
Wishing to look with their own eye
Into the face of the God of wrath.

This was her bay. Not tranquil, then,
And this her hill. Here lie her dead.
Yes, I am linked to those old men
And to the way they sought for bread

Both for the body and the soul.
Not altogether—No, we gain
Near wisdom as we near the goal,
But theirs, as mine, was honest pain,

And theirs was labor to fulfil
A destiny beyond the grave.
Their ship seems in this harbor still,
And from this hill I turn, and wave.

JOHN PORTER HEYMANN.

Saratoga Resartus

EUPHEMIA VAN RENSSELAER WYATT

NOT LONG AGO a mammoth auction sale disposed of the furnishings of the United States Hotel in Saratoga. So stupefying was the sum total of the number of square feet of carpet it contained that, to avoid the task of rolling it, the auctioneers decided to sell it, statu quo, on the floor. Those endless munificently carpeted rooms and corridors were emblematic of the age of amplitude of which the United States Hotel stood proudly sentinel.

It was in 1898 that my Aunt Mary invited me to accompany her and Uncle John Screven when they went to take their annual cure at Saratoga. The old Spa was then Queen on a pedestal between two centuries. Her waters drew their perennial patrons, but a new clientele was showing appreciation of her race track and select gambling establishments. Saratoga was at once the American Baden Baden, Ascot and Monte Carlo. Her own ineluctible dignity, however, was still intact, framed in the serenity of the rolling, fertile fields around her and the elegance of her arching elm trees. The combination of interests was still not too incongruous. It was as if a jockey had drifted into a reception in a great mansion remaining unnoticed in the general grandeur. It would not be until his more undesirable friends began crowding in after him that the difference in the quality of the guests would become apparent.

The United States as yet maintained decorous control of the new element. The racing set were made to pay extravagantly for their intrusion. While the regular guests were housed in the main building, the ultra smart took over the "cottages," great three story edifices across the courtyard where every suite had the modern innovation of a private bath-tub. My Uncle and Aunt, who had been coming to Saratoga regularly for the last quarter of a century, always had their same double room — without bath — while mine was the "single" variety. It was an impressive apartment, roughly about the size of a Quonset Hut with a ceiling at least fifteen feet high. There was a heavy flowered red carpet; knobby black walnut furniture; a bed with a high head board and walnut wardrobe, both with garlanded carving. Thick Brussels lace curtains were festooned on either side of the very tall window where, attached to a staple, was a knotted rope in lieu of a fire escape. In a corner was a white marble wash basin with running water — cold — the hot was brought in a covered container by the chambermaid.

My room overlooked the vast courtyard, ornamented with elms and beds of geraniums and bounded on four sides by the hotel and a colossal piazza furnished with hundreds of rocking chairs.

I must have been about fifteen. My Aunt had warned me that I would probably find no companions of my own age so I had brought along "Sartor Resartus" and became duly intimate with Thomas Carlyle. He admonished me to do whatever I did with all my might so I read him industriously and copied down for future reference. "The fraction of life can be increased in value — not so much by increasing the numerator as by decreasing the denominator. Make thy claim of wages a Zero then; thou hast the world under thy feet." The first morning in Saratoga, my Aunt took me out to look at the shops and gave me a box of Huyler's chocolates, a small ivory elephant and ten dollars for spending money. I was much elated and found the chocolates a useful stimulus to philosophy.

I can't remember ever being bored, although I only met one other girl, Carolyn Fellowes, and she was older and went every day to the races. But the front piazza of the United States offered a box seat for a magnificent panorama. Giant elms shaded the triple width of the dirt road that was Main Street, over which were rolling more horse-drawn vehicles than I had ever dreamed existed. Surreys "with a fringe round the top" were of course there in myriad, single and double; slender buckboards whirled past drawn by long tailed "Morgans"; basket phaetons with high-stepping bob-tailed Hackneys; heavy Victorias, haughtily displaying their glittering silver monogrammed harness, the two men in livery on their box and the ladies behind, with lacy parasols, sitting in richly upholstered state; high dog-carts with a booted groom, maintaining a sometimes precarious balance with folded arms on the back seat (he usually sat backwards). And weaving through the throng were impatient sulkies, their drivers with their feet stretched out on the poles, sitting on the tails of their pacers or trotters — the nearest equivalent to a motor cycle. Buggies were driven by the farmers and doctors. Then suddenly would come the faraway tally-ho of a horn and, presently bearing down on lesser vehicles like a racing yacht, a four-in-hand would be brought up with a dramatic dash to the steps of the hotel. While grooms leaped to the heads of the foam-flecked leaders, beautiful women with veils swathed round their enormous hats would be lifted down from the exalted seats beside or behind the Whip with his covert coat and boutonniere whose inevitable lap-rug, tightly tucked about him, must never, never come below his knees.

After the arrival of vanloads of Vanderbilt or Whitney Saratoga trunks, one could return to the inner piazza and watch a fashion parade of the guests. Everyone at Saratoga was always dressed up all the time, and it was the time when each dress was made to order as an individual masterpiece with hat and parasol to match; when

dressess had pleats and ruffles and lace and ribbons and swelling puffed sleeves and hats were miniature flower gardens or aviaries. But it was Carlyle who lent spice to Saratoga because, after watching the parade of wealth and fashion, I could go upstairs and read about the hollowness of dress and other human institutions. It was like jumping from an orchestra seat to backstage.

I only went once to the races, taken by some friends of my Uncle, and even the memory is blurred in a haze of excitement.

"Unusual to see *you* here," said my one acquaintance, Carolyn, "Know anybody's horse who is running?" When I shook my head, she had no further interest in me.

What was called a "light luncheon" but was probably a good-sized meal was served early for the racing public. Dinner, at the United States, was at three o'clock. The Headwaiter, in particularly gorgeous full dress, was an aging Negro on the same grandiose proportions as the dining-room; in fact he was the walking embodiment of a United States Dinner Menu . . . It was a meal devised for leviathan. Breakfast had covered pretty thoroughly the field of comestibles but dinner was a challenge to longevity. There were eight courses of many choices — all bountiful and extravagant. It endured for two hours, and after dinner the hotel was engulfed in contented lethargy. If diets were prescribed at Saratoga, my Uncle and Aunt paid no attention to them. Major Screven was used to ponderous meals and Aunt Mary had her own eccentric regimen of green tea and black molasses and plenty of radishes when in season.

Their lives revolved in an orbit as regular as the planetary system. Immediately after Christmas they always left their gloomy brownstone house in 39th Street for Yemassee, South Carolina, where the Major had a plantation. Their summers were spent at Castle Hill, a country place on the Sound at the mouth of the Bronx River. There is still a Castle Hill stop in the Lexington Avenue subway. There, Major Screven would ride over the estate on a sleek black hack followed by a few of his favorite hounds from the pack he brought up North for the summer. At night the fox hounds were let loose and bayed through the woods. My Uncle was a handsome man of leonine build with white whiskers. He looked like a monument to the Southern aristocracy. Our relationships were purely objective. To him I was just one of the smaller disadvantages he had acquired in marrying his Mary. To me he was as remote as an illustration in a book too elaborately bound for young people's use. Occasionally when visiting Castle Hill, I would peep with trepidation through the door of the billiard-room to watch the rhythmic rise and fall of the cambric handkerchief he always placed over his face as he napped in the huge leather rocking chair he had

had made to order in London. When the bugling of the Major's snores were audible, all other sounds were hushed. Uncle John, the head waiter of the United States Hotel, and Saratoga were all of the same pattern of magnificence.

At dinner on our last day at the United States, Uncle John knocked a whole bottle of burgundy into my lap. Gallantly he offered to buy me a new dress. My heart sang so loudly I could no longer hear the taunts of Professor Teufelsdröckh in "Sartor Resartus." The wine-drenched dress was not a very successful creation of a modest dress-maker and I had already decided that its shade of "crushed strawberry" was a mistake. All night I dreamed of delicate colors in the latest style but Teufelsdröckh was a stronger force than I had reckoned. Some Poltergeist of his must have had access to the walnut wardrobe, for when I opened it the next morning that spiteful wine-bibbing dress, turned sober, showed not one trace of all the good burgundy it had drunk. Honesty required me to confess to my Uncle that his liability was cancelled.

That afternoon when we arrived at the station, the fabulous Mrs. Philip Lydig stepped off the train. Her provocative profile and clear white skin were set off by the classic severity of smooth black hair; her incredibly thin and elegant figure was accentuated by a glove-tight black "princess" gown. Rather disdainfully she looked out from under the canopy of a huge black picture hat. My own waistline had not been improved by Saratoga dinners and as I became acutely conscious of my unfashionable dumpiness, I wondered if I would step regally down from a parlor car, followed by a maid with a jewel-case and a convoy of porters, looking as if I had just been painted by Sargent?

It isn't always so easy to limit your claim on the future to the Zero suggested by Thomas Carlyle.

Alfred Stieglitz

(January 1, 1864—July 13, 1946)

PAUL ROSENFELD

IN THE rooms of the Camera Club, in his little Photo-Secession Gallery under the roof at 291 Fifth Avenue, in his small corner room in the old Anderson Galleries, finally at An American Place, Alfred Stieglitz from the beginning of the century until three days before death fought one of the most shining of battles, in New York, ever fought for art. Unhesitatingly one sets it beside such splendid struggles as Courbet's and Manet's for realism in mid-nineteenth-century Paris, as Wagner's long struggle with the opera-house public of Europe. Fought like these for the artist's right to work in strict accord with his vision, like these it resulted at the very least in a wide development of taste. Yet in the end one sets it closest of all to Rembrandt's war with the art-dealers of Amsterdam and Ruskin's indefatigable championship of

Turner's work. Exactly as in Rembrandt's and Ruskin's battles, something even more important than the artist's right to work in utter sincerity and responsibility was the object in that of Stieglitz. This was the recognition of the spiritual and immeasurable value of art: not alone of the art of this man or that, but of all good art.

★

A photographer from his youth, with the artist's love of sensuous and pictorial beauty, but with a powerful craving to live in the truth, Stieglitz had discovered the work of art to be a means of permitting the world to show itself in its true form. For him as for the Platonists, the human being learns to know the externalities of nature and her creatures through perceptions, but the deep-lying forces at work in her and them reveal themselves to the human being only in his inwardness, as subjective experiences. Art was nothing if not the expression of these perceptions suffused with the inwardly experienced, deeper secrets of things. But for art, the world possibly might wear an untrue face. . . . At the same time he discovered that while the inner truth of things, which is the artist's real subject, remains a single truth in every age and clime—indeed in every great personality—it speaks a different language or dialect. Curiously, this language or dialect often times is incomprehensible or abhorrent to its contemporaries.

Filled with this craving to live in the truth, with the sense of art's meaning and the knowledge that the inner truth speaks a different dialect in every age and clime, Stieglitz for almost fifty years strove to present and naturalize, protect and further, the new and therefore needy art of his own age and that of his own nation. In countless startling exhibitions and with cumulative effect, he presented to an indifferent public and championed before it a vast range of plastic art stretching from the pictorial photography of the 1900's—Steichen's, Gertrude Kaesebier's, Clarence White's, Paul Strand's and his own—onward through the watercolors of Cézanne, the oils and sculptures of Matisse and Picasso, to the work of modern Americans such as Marin, Hartley, O'Keeffe, Demuth, Lachaise, down to the latest oil by a still unappreciated great colorist, Arthur Dove. Because of these feelings, too, for some fourteen years he published *Camera Work*, one of the most beautiful magazines ever to be issued (many plates in it are original pulls, and even the advertisements were shapely) and filled it with pictorial photography and reproduction of modern art. And because of them he was in his galleries all day, on his feet, talking to the public and listening to it, reasoning, jesting, standing up to the world for art.

But if it was mainly "modern" French and American art which dazed New York and gradually entered its consciousness and America's from the walls of 291 Fifth Avenue and of every one of Stieglitz's subsequent battle-grounds, the reason also was that the pictorial art of the period preceding our own had been impressionistic, and the photographic art naturalistic. This is to say that while magically reproducing the appearances of things, both had pretty much neglected to permeate their accurate

perceptions with inner experiences of the deeper secrets. However the art of our own period, post-impressionistic or "modern" art, had resumed the old effort to construe the world. It had presented designs symbolic of its inner architecture. So too for that matter had pictorial photography, in particular that of Stieglitz himself. A photographer of the forces of things, he indubitably was one of the world's great portraitists.

Still in one respect the battle of this extremely complex, wonderfully clean, bright, decent individual stands in a category entirely its own. Those other ones—while they sincerely concerned great and general principles and values and the work of individuals only as representatives of these principles and values, included among their ends certain practical objects, which succinctly were the "success," or freedom to function, of the work of the fighters or leaders in the fights themselves. Or, if the battles were group-battles, like that for instance of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, they were waged by the entire group for the entire group's success. Now, Stieglitz's struggle also included a practical object. But it was not the success of his own photography. Conceivably he might have waged his war with an eye to that success, or subordinated the success of his fellow-artists to his own. Indeed he might have found valid reasons for doing so. A photographer with a flow of fabulously delicate tactile feeling and of *pathos*; a magician of the developing room, he was and remained a prodigy. Certainly persons in his entourage were ever ready to assure him that, despite the brilliance of Marin, the genius of O'Keeffe, he himself was the major member of his artistic group; ready too to reproach him for not having made his own work the subject of a greater number of his exhibitions. And doubtless he would have enjoyed the use of money. He had a taste for the life of sport: loved to play billiards and attend horse-races. But he was a "democratic" individual; at least an individual of a modern type.

★

Passionately desirous of the opportunity to function, he desired to function only as the member of an active group. What actually he desired was the functioning of the entire group of which he was a member. Possibly the reason was that he was deeply lonely. So he presented the unique spectacle of a great artist never in possession of more than a modest competence deliberately assuming responsibility during almost fifty years for groups of fellow-workers. Taking nothing for himself, striving incessantly to find means of permitting them to continue to work, he saw certain fellows through to the very hour of his death. Actually he created a sort of spiritual climate in which it was possible for artists to give their best by holding all things to their fairest level, as he did while affirming the value of true art and standing up to the American world day after day for its sake. His fellows knew he was there, ready to struggle for them. They knew that the higher and purer their endeavors, the gladder he was to see them and to try and bring the rest of the world around to seeing. Other things might change. But he would not.

The Stage & Screen

Notes from the West

I THINK it may seem fairly frivolous, trying to fit a small travelogue into this serious theater column, but nevertheless I mean to try it. And perhaps by a process of devious selection, it can be done. It is true I have already seen two productions on this coast but, as interesting as they were, they have certainly spent only a portion of the week and I am sufficiently selfish to want to tie them somehow into the rest. One way to accomplish this will be architectural, I think; or at least, formal. After all, due to the physical conventions of our theaters, one must, in considering almost any entertainment, look through a frame; the proscenium arch has four sides, even though one of them happens to extend to a floor. And this process is surely not so very different from looking through a window, provided action is presented, or at least a setting for action. If the analogy is accepted, I shall be able to mention the play of clouds, fog, lightnings, clear sun and air from the windows of the transcontinental plane; the million midnight lights reflected in the harbor of the world from the windows on Nob Hill; the three infinitesimal dancing Black Mollies and the sardonic Moorish Idol through the windows of San Francisco's aquarium; the endless endless Pacific through a window at Point Lobos; the slow roll and sweep of the Carmel hills through the window in front of me. As well as the Chinese play in the theater on Grant Avenue; as well as the Belasco melodrama in the coast's oldest playhouse at Monterey. All of this adds up to seven days and a wonderful show I think. If I am uncertain just yet how to cast it, doubtless I shall learn that too, in time. I have been assured there are *characters* in California as well as everywhere else.

At the Mandarin Theater in Chinatown the ticket men were playing gin rummy in the box office and after we got in, we discovered the Caucasian people were grouped together, not isolated but simply sitting in one part of the auditorium. The curtain was up and, except for an increase of size and color in the trappings, I did not find the atmosphere to differ greatly from New York's Chinese theater under the bridge on East Broadway. The orchestra with its incessant tin drum was seated in the same position, onstage right, and the activities of the house here, some three thousand miles away, were parallel. Everyone had oranges to eat, or coca-colas, conversation was general, newspapers frequently read, and round smiling babies with large bags of popcorn were planked down firmly all over the place and as firmly left to their own devices. The small twelve-year-old usher with pigtails and an enormous arrangement of bubble gum was a great help to me. First she found me a well-bitten pencil and then, when I asked for some help in translation, she went into conference with her three assistants, ages ranging from four to nine. In the end, and after much argument, she assured me the title of the piece was untranslatable, in

that it consisted of names, but that the gist of the thing could be summed up thus: "A Girl Is Teasing A Man Three Times." On stage, I was not able honestly to distinguish The Girl from among the rest, nor indeed securely to spot The Man, but the drama was unmistakable, and battles, conferences, love-scenes, and soliloquies all progressed, phrased by the drum and sticks, a kind of banjo, and that strange ear-splitting fiddle. Here the overall set impression was of pinks and reds, dazzled with sequins, and with an inner canvas painted to represent now a palace, now a garden, and so on. Of course, the most interesting phenomenon in this alien fandango will be, I should say, the vocabulary of gesture in use. I do not mean the comportment or gesture dictated by the especial costumes, but rather the conventional motion, the lawful one. Why, for instance, should the prettiest girl exit always in a small twirl during which she presents the sole of her slipper to the audience while facing the back of the stage? Why should all of the make-up consist in the pinkest of rouge spread only over the cheekbones and the lids of the eyes? Why should the handsomest and most graceful young man proceed always in circles, never taking a straight course, and rarely standing still. It is easy enough to imagine that someone is teasing someone, everyone is after all chanting about something, but it is impossible to guess who matches who, or what, or why. I think for an Occidental, even with an interpreter, an experience of this kind cannot ever be wholly or immediately assimilated, but must be gradually gathered. However, for an hour or so on any evening, the event seems to me truly internationally interesting and valuable; something to offset the detestable pidgin popularizations of a "Lute Song," for example.

Convention was also at work in the Gold Coast Troupers' production of "The Rose of the Rancho" in California's first theater, now a state monument, at Monterey. But it appeared mainly in travesty, in the hilarious Olio following the play, a divertissement in which all of the players share, as well as the house. The Belasco-Tully piece, however, is played straight, and very well I thought, the amount of youth and freshness displayed, substituting for an occasional lack of style. I was astonished at the holding qualities of the play, its characterizations, its not infrequent subtleties. Although, I imagine, astutely cut by the director, Wilma Bott, it presented none of the expected slickness nor embroidery. The theater itself is an enchanting structure, built of adobe brick, long, narrow and beamed, and with a tiny stage which was expertly set, plotted, and stepped by the players. I have seen nothing better in the summer East, and this young company plays the year round and has done right through the war. I would initial this venture, if you are heading this way.

Outside this door, one finds oneself in the middle of the valley, confronting the hills on all sides. The world is around and around and around, under a round sky, and it is surely a waste of time searching for it through windows or any frame. It is apparent I shall have to do some real work from now on.

KAPPO PHELAN.

Dog Days in the East

THE LATEST contribution of California to Broadway is not a movie but a "legitimate" play, which ran for 86 weeks in Los Angeles, 62 weeks in Chicago, 12 weeks in San Francisco, 9 weeks in Detroit, 6 in St. Louis, etc. etc., including of course Atlantic City. It is considerably worse than even the worst movies, which at least have the virtue of professional workmanship. "Maid in the Ozarks," a hill-billy comedy by Claire Parrish described by its press agent as a "'Tobacco Road' without brakes," is badly written, badly staged and badly acted. It is vulgar without gusto, slapstick without fun, consistently dull and distasteful. Jules Pfeiffer, the producer, who accurately predicted "that the general critical consensus will be that this play is the worst that has ever hit Broadway," deserves some sort of Oscar (tar and buzzard feathers?) as Public Enemy No. 1 of the American theater. (*At the Belasco.*) DAVID BURNHAM.

Music Is the Winner

IT IS an interesting point that in a couple of new musical films, the music is the main attraction. Even in competing with elaborate casts, lush technicolor and production designed to knock your eye out, the music is what you'll remember long after you've forgotten the faint-hearted efforts of stars to enact thin stories. Perhaps this is as it should be if entertainment is the prime motive, but such films do little to forward the cause of cinema.

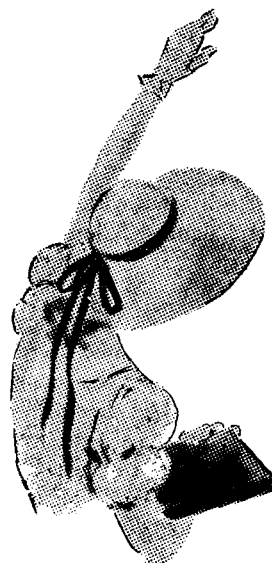
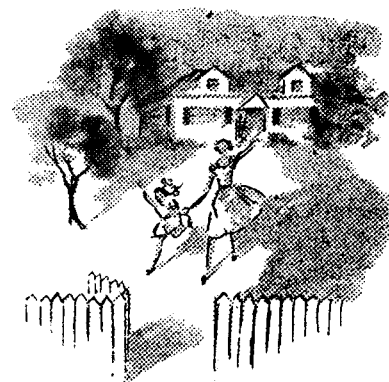
In "*Night and Day*" the music of Cole Porter comes through beautifully. It is a pleasure to hear again such numbers as "What Is This Thing Called Love?", "I've Got You under My Skin," "Begin the Beguine," "I Get a Kick Out of You." But these good songs pop up like pegs in a story singularly without drama. No doubt the writers thought in basing their script on Porter's "career" instead of his life, they could avoid issues that might be precarious in portraying real people who are still alive. Unfortunately the film makes many of these real people no more real than the dummies in a department-store window.

The main conflict in the latter part of "*Night and Day*" seems to be between Cole (Cary Grant so underplaying the role that he's always Cary Grant) and his wife (Alexis Smith in a series of handsome gowns). She, rather rightfully, resents their house (full of actors and producers) being like the Grand Central Station and her husband's I-love-you-but-I'm-busy attitude. Monty Woolley plays himself, the Yale professor who became Cole's good friend and adviser as well as the man who came so definitely to dinner that his beard now belongs to the world. He puts his all into Porter's brilliant satirical song: "Miss Otis Regrets." Ginny Simms and Jane Wyman handle most of the songs and do them very well — Miss Simms specializing on those originally written for Ethel Merman. There are of course several good production numbers sung and danced by a variety of specialists. Once again Mary Martin manages to steal the show with her deft interpretation of "My Heart Belongs to Daddy." But it is difficult to single out any one of Porter's songs as best; in fact

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"You're the Top" could very well have been the film's title. Perhaps it should have been; then the script-writers might not have given us that ridiculous scene which shows Grant at the piano composing "Night and Day" and being inspired by the "drip, drip, drip of the raindrops" and the presence of Alexis Smith. (Porter really wrote it for Fred Astaire.)

For "*Centennial Summer*" the late Jerome Kern wrote some delightful tunes: "All through the Day," "In Love in Vain," "Up with the Lark," etc. But most of these get lost in a welter of plot involving four young people (Jeanne Crain, Cornel Wilde, Linda Darnell, William Eythe) and their elders (Walter Brennan, Dorothy Gish, Constance Bennett). Somehow this story, although played before a colorful background of Philadelphia's 1876 Exposition, is a little too deeply steeped in petty meanness for a musical comedy. Linda, as Jeanne's sister, acts too nasty to be laughed off lightly after Cornel and William are juggled between the girls. And Miss Gish's jealousy of *her* sister (Miss Bennett) is rather absurd. Actually this story is on the dull side, and producer-director Otto Preminger's handling of it lacks the care-free touch of similar pictures like "State Fair" and "Meet Me In St. Louis." In one scene, however, the action fits the music, and the film comes to life with first-rate entertainment: Avon Long sings and dances "Cinderella Sue" in a style worthy of good Kern. Unfortunately this is Mr. Long's only appearance. You won't exactly be bored by "Centennial Summer," but you may wish that all of its departments were as good as the Jerome Kern score.

Somewhat less in the pretentious line is the George Jessell production, "*Do You Love Me?*" Director Gregory Ratoff skips rather casually over its old-chestnut plot about a dignified music-school dean (Maureen O'Hara) who learns to titivate and soon finds herself being fought over by "The Crown Prince of Crooners" (Dick Haymes) and a "vulgar, raucous trumpet player" (Harry James *himself*). The beauteous Miss O'Hara is more convincing when spruced up, but the story is not to be considered seriously. Anyway the music takes over — and, if you like jam sessions and jive, you'll find entertainment in the musical competition between Singer Haymes and Trumpeter James. The title song, the dancing to "Moonlight Propaganda," Reginald Gardiner's conducting a full orchestra, and Harry James' boys doing "St. Louis Blues" will surely send you—one way or t'other.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Let Them Talk And Talk

C. G. PAULDING

WILLIE is all right for a name but Brewsie* is a wee coy bit peculiar and when you are reading "Brewsie and Willie" in the subway somebody might say to you be your age because you certainly don't look as

*Brewsie and Willie. Gertrude Stein. Random. \$2.00.

if you were age ten and you ought to be able to spell out the words even in a newspaper. The words in a newspaper they are easy and there are no troubles in them, "my gracious, my good gracious and no worries. Oh my good gracious, oh my good gracious and no worries, my good gracious." That is Brewsie talking to Willie, to Brock, to Jo, his GI friends and to the "fatter and younger" Red Cross nurse who is Pauline and very "cute." She has a whole chapter to herself, Chapter Fifteen, and here it is:

Fifteen

What's the matter, said Willie. Well it kind of makes me cry, said Pauline, What makes you cry, said Willie, well the way you said we hadnt guts enough to make ourselves heard, it does make me cry. Yeah but have we, said Willie, Well, said Pauline, it does kind of make me cry.

It has become at last possible to write about a book by Gertrude Stein because nobody in his senses thinks any more that she is a joke. Some people of course will think that Chapter Fifteen is funny and they will think that it has been put here out of context in order to make sure that they will think that it is funny, but really it is here so that whoever thinks it is funny can think so quickly without wasting time because it is so short, and then can look at it again and notice with what perfection the rhythm of this interchange is rendered. Rewrite this passage using punctuation the way it is taught in the schools and see how flat it becomes when it loses its extraordinarily sensitive and deliberate timing. The phrase, "What makes you cry, said Willie, well the way . . ." brought in with a capital letter for the eye, but after a comma as sufficient pause, and avoiding the re-introduction of Pauline, is as close as the ear can get, not to stenography, but to the rhythm of thought. I think this passage, selected at random, can be read again and again with growing appreciation of the masterful and musical curve it describes.

Of course that is the trouble. If you have a whole book, no matter how short (this one is only 114 pages) which has to be read as carefully as you would read a poem, you simply don't read the book that way. It is not a question of difficulty either in form or in subject matter. In some of Miss Stein's earlier work the difficulty in subject matter was simply the difficulty of finding any interest in the subject matter; there was never any difficulty in the form if once you were prepared to follow the indications of comma or period or the lack of both, if you were willing to read at the cadence clearly indicated by the punctuation. Miss Stein's thinking is not difficult in the sense that Mallarmé is difficult; when she wrote her book about the French under German occupation the subject matter and her own emotions were extremely simple; the form there was close to the action and to the description and it presented no difficulty. The difficulty, however, always remained in that book as in all her other books and it is always the same: it is most trying to have to submit to the discipline of her cadences.

In "Brewsie and Willie" there is, it seems to me, a special and very interesting difficulty which comes from

the artist's choice. Gracious, goodness gracious, oh my goodness gracious how American Miss Stein has remained in her heart. This intellectual, trained in medicine, living abroad for years and years, experimenting with words, drawing her interest in words from her scientific turn of mind and from Rimbaud, Mallarmé and all sorts of Frenchmen who take the technique of writing so seriously, this friend of all experimentation and of Picasso, suddenly began traveling round in airplanes and jeeps from one American army base to another, listening, listening and listening to the talk of "the boys." "GI's and GI's and GI's and they have made me come all over patriotic. I was always patriotic, I was always in my way a Civil War veteran, but in between, there were other things, but now there are no other things." That is what she says and it is true. So that when she wanted to write down what the GI's had said to her, she did not write as if she were a foreigner, she renounced every kind of clear intellectual judgment from outside, she did not make a cold description of these youths wandering round Europe after the fighting was over and not even knowing in what country they were, noticing practically nothing of what was round them. She let them do the talking; she let them do the worrying. All by themselves, without very much help from her, except that she hates industrialism and men who are employee-minded and so perhaps the GI's talk a little more about these subjects than they would have done if she had not been there with them.

Brewsie was the great worrier. In chapter after chapter it is Brewsie who starts out worrying about what it will be like to go home. Brewsie is the worrier for all the GI's in the book; he is their delegate to do the worrying. Little by little the others get started worrying too, until at the end: "Where is the man who talks, said Pauline? They won't let him talk any more, said Willie, who won't let him talk any more, said Janet, the officers? Oh dear no, said Willie, it's all the guys, they found out from listening to him how to do it and now they all talk and talk and think it sounds just like him."

They all talk and talk and that is the difficulty of this book. Miss Stein listens to them talk, arranges their talk in wonderful patterns, but the GI talk never got anywhere when she was listening to it and that is the feeling you have about this book. The themes are the themes of their worries, but they stay worried; they know that they want to say something; they know that somebody has to say something and that they had better say it before they get middle-aged because there is nothing worse than to have a country run by the middle-aged; but they don't quite know what to say in order to be each one himself. They are afraid that they will always, all their lives sound all alike. "I guess job men just have to articulate alike; they got to articulate yes or no to their bosses, and yes or no to their unions, they just got to articulate alike, and when you begin to articulate alike, you got to drop thinking out, just got to drop it out, you can go on feeling different but you got to articulate the same Gallup poll, yes you do. . . ."

So that Miss Stein has to sum it all up in a last chapter she has kept for herself because when Brewsie or Willie,

Brock or Jo, Pauline or Janet, is doing the talking it may be wonderful the way it is undoubtedly in Chapter Fifteen, but it does not get you anywhere at all—except to show what they all were worrying about and that is how, when you have to have a job, you can, or you cannot make it possible to feel as an individual and that means stay free.

In that last chapter Miss Stein has one phrase that tells what she has attempted. She is not talking about her work; she is telling one of the things Americans have to do: it was all too simple; it was all yes or no; it has always been too simple: produce until you get into prosperity and then into depression. But now, Miss Stein says "you have to really learn to express complication. . . . Yes you do."

Horizon's Editor

ANNE FREMANTLE

"A MAGAZINE," Mr. Cyril Connolly wrote editorially in the first issue of *Horizon*, monthly review of literature and art that appeared in England at Christmas, 1939, "should be the reflection of its time. At this moment," he went on, "civilization is on the operating table, and we sit in the waiting room." Later, in answer to the carpings and cavilings of various critics of the infant periodical, he defined the functions of his magazine still more clearly: "*Horizon* is not a responsible magazine—it cannot always celebrate centenaries, nor even tercentenaries. It cannot keep up with books of the month. *Horizon* is not a political magazine . . . [yet in 1945 he talks of the Labor Government as the one "for which we voted" and in June, 1946, he cites as the major indication of a civilized community a program of 10 items which constitute a formidable political platform] *Horizon* does not exist to give new writers their first chance . . . it is an adult periodical."

That last sentence is, indeed, the most operative. In a world directed largely by criminally irresponsible adolescents or by cynical and complacent old men, *Horizon* is written and edited by grown-ups for other grown-ups. And in this lies its uniqueness, and because of this it is become a sign of contradiction. For, although the first issue was sold out in a week, and is now a collector's rarity, "yet" Mr. Connolly wrote in the second issue "our friends tell us that nobody likes it." Now in its seventh

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year, *Horizon* has lately been the subject of admiring essays by Mr. Edmund Wilson in the *New Yorker* and by Mr. Jacques Barzun in *The Atlantic Monthly*, whilst still more recently, Mr. Connolly's new book rated the lead review in the Books section of the New York *Herald Tribune*. Yet in his editorial comment for January, 1946, Mr. Connolly wrote: "it is fitting to start the new year by squaring up to . . . our many thousand enemies." Then he proceeds to deal faithfully with some particular complaints: "'Horizon has gone off'—and left you behind, I fear? 'It's above my head.' 'Ah, your head, reader? What recent gains in sensibility have you to register . . .?'"

The cover design is by John Piper; the first number began with Auden, and went alphabetically through Prokosch to Spender; yet later issues have also included the work of such unliterary writers as J. B. Priestley and Sir Hugh Walpole, whilst much that first appeared in *Horizon* has since been published in book form: the short stories of Elizabeth Bowen ("Ivy Gripp'd the Steps"), the essays of George Orwell (including the epic on Boys' Magazines) and political essays by such men as R. H. Crossman and John Strachey, now Minister of Food. Day Lewis, MacNeice, Alun Lewis, Louis Aragon and Paul Eluard are some of *Horizon's* poets, whilst it has used many translations from contemporary Russian and Italian and Spanish poets, as well as publishing almost the whole of Augustus John's autobiography, most of Peter Quennell's biographical studies of the eighteenth century, and devoting entire numbers to France, Switzerland and Russia. Regularly too, even in the war's worst days, there were reports from the occupied countries and much Resistance literature was first published in *Horizon*, after circulating in clandestinely printed form. American theater and painting, as well as the American scene, have also been covered, but to a very small extent compared with the attention devoted to the European countries; it is therefore especially good news that Mr. Connolly is coming here this fall, with a view to discussing an American edition of *Horizon*.

Horizon's illustrations, too, have always been a great feature: Paul Klee and Ghikas, Joan Miro, Paul Delvaux and Wilfredo Lam, to mention but a few, were exhaustively appreciated and admirable reproductions published of their paintings, at a time when the procuring of paper and the difficulties of printing must have been a greater nightmare even than queueing endlessly for naked fish or heavily pointed spam.

★

For the six years of the war *Horizon* served both as the only *salon* and the only *café* in Europe. There could be neither, of course, physically—the great houses were, in their several countries, or burned, or bombed, or used as girls' school or a hospital. The *cafés* too, from the *Deux Magots* to the old Café de Paris at Piccadilly Circus, were either in the hands of the enemy or were serving acorn coffee only. In the pages of *Horizon*, alone, could still take place that interchange of opinion which, to the intelligent, is the only currently valid substitute for all that has been lost. Yet *Horizon* has never, thank heaven, become a *forum*; it has never been pompous or self-

consciously good-willed. Nor has it been merely a substitute, an ersatz for *salon* and *café* dead and for the shadow of lost Europe. Rather, it has been an experiment in communications—perhaps the only successful one to arise out of the war. Intellectual man, being the most delicate, because the most highly developed, example of *homo sapiens*, must, above everything, keep his line of communications clear. Cut him off, and he does not only merely starve—he suffocates. *Horizon*, throughout its brief, brilliant existence, has been for every one of its readers, as well as for all its authors, a place of refreshment from existing conditions, and a refuge from one's own fascist moments, no less than from everyone else's. For, as its editor wrote: "Fascism is a disease, as catching as influenza. When tired or disillusioned, we all have our fascist moments."

Nor have *Horizon* or its editor ever forgotten that the same virtues are essential to the artist and the writer as to the saint; that justice and truth, courage and compassion, humility and honesty are necessary because, without them, the highest intelligence becomes intellectualized, the noblest idealism fattens into imperialism. To face up to the real and the phony, in himself, in other people, and in society, has been the high policy of *Horizon's* editor.

In the first month of the blitz, Mr. Connolly said, editorially, "Both revolutionary, Communism offers justice to the workers, Fascism adventure to the clerks. What does England offer? 'Our way of life.' But many people do not like our way of life and too few can lead it." A little later, he refused to be stampeded into a false pride in the discomforts his readers—and himself—were enduring, gently chiding Mr. W. H. Auden, whose shame at being out of London caused him to deal too gently with Harold Laski. "Supposing the contents of *Horizon* were judged, not on their literary merit, but by the amount of suffering their contributors have endured?" Mr. Connolly mocks at the time when *Horizon* was raised to the price of a packet of cigarettes.

Nor has *Horizon's* editor feared to burn publicly what he once adored. "The bombs," he comments in the issue for May, 1941, "which have emptied so many drawing-rooms, have also been blasting the reputations made in them. Re-reading Proust and Joyce, both seem to me very sick men, who, in spite of enormous talent, were crippled by the same diseases, elephantiasis of the ego." From this complaint, Mr. Connolly seems himself to have been saved—perhaps by his own architecture, perhaps by his new year resolutions for 1942: "Lose a stone (14 pounds) then all the rest will follow . . . fatness is a state of mind." When the US magazine *Decision*, in June, 1941, asked, "Why doesn't Duff-Cooper appoint the editor of *Horizon* to organize a branch of that publication in this country," he modestly replied that a better idea would be for Britain to invite about 100 representative writers, painters, photographers, editors and artistic directors to visit England, since "in spite of the diplomatic and economic communications, there is no communication between the artists and intellectuals of the two countries . . . and an island fortress must always be on its guard against provincialism."

Mr. Connolly can starkly face the worst. "Morally and economically, Europe has lost the war. The great marquee of European civilization in whose yellow light we all grew up . . . has fallen down" and yet he remains hopeful. "If there is one sentiment which we have tried to avoid in *Horizon*," he writes in June, 1946, "it is national pride. But returning after six weeks, from Dover to London I felt what can only be described as a patriotic glow. First, because we have no black market, with its consequent atmosphere of dishonesty, and an immense cleavage between rich and poor." And he goes on to praise England for the decision to evacuate Egypt and India: "we at last admit that the right to liberty of the inhabitants of a country overrules the benefits, however well-intentioned, of occupation." He has faced this year with an ambitious list of resolutions, amongst which are: "to get out of the bad habit of enthroning one set of writers as the best people; to try and make the Government do more to encourage culture; to get the prison system cleaned up, to combat puritanism and nationalism and cruelty and injustice . . . to abolish the death penalty and to work for a new humanism which considers human life vulgar but sacred, and the happiness, even of other people, our chief aim." Previously he had long held the infant hands of the Resistance in France; now, like a wise nurse, he seeks to uncrisp the little fingers. *Horizon* will carry fewer articles about France, fewer French writers and poets.

★

What of the editor apart from his magazine? Can Cyril Connolly be uncensored? "I have always disliked myself, at any given moment, and the sum of these moments is my life," he has told his readers. Born in 1903, educated at Eton and Balliol, Mr. Connolly has written a novel, "The Rock Pool"; a book half of literary criticism, half of autobiography, "Enemies of Promise"; and a slim volume of belles-lettres well-larded with aphorism, which Harpers published last year, entitled "The Unquiet Grave." Now Messrs. Macmillan offer 37 essays, written between 1927-1944, which Mr. Connolly has called "The Condemned Playground" (287 pages, \$2.75).

This latter is a good Connolly reader for beginners. The literary essays—on Joyce, Gide, Swift, Horace, Sterne, etc., are brilliant and polished as a good butler's silver. The controversy on A. E. Housman is really stimulating and exciting. The various attempts at humor—such as "Where Engels feared to tread"—are blush-making—vestigial infantilisms that make the reader's toes curl like parsley with their oh, so naughty little jingles and their tidbits like "Merrie England gets a facial" and their jokes about the Almanach de Golgotha.

It is when Mr. Connolly is completely serious—in the sense of the French *serieux*—that he is superb. His lecture on French and English cultural relations, delivered in Edinburgh under the auspices of the British Council, and his review of W. Somerset Maugham's "The Razor's Edge," and, above all, his review of Anthony, Lord Knebworth's life by Lord Lytton, are absolutely outstanding. The last is actually a dirge for the British upper classes.

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Cyril Connolly had known Lord Knebworth at Eton, "where for the first time I was aware of the layer of blubber which encases an English peer—the sediment of permanent adulation."

Eton, and the fate of Elizabethans turned fascist, of whom Anthony Knebworth was one, led Mr. Connolly to his *Theory of Permanent Adolescence*—that the "experiences undergone by boys at the great English public schools, their glories and disappointments—are so intense as to dominate their lives and arrest their development. From there it results that the greater part of the ruling class remains adolescent, cowardly, sentimental, and, in the last result, homo-sexual." He has given an unforgettable description of his own school experiences in "Enemies of Promise": of himself dancing on a mantelpiece whilst his fag-master brandished a red-hot poker between his feet; of Edward Marjoribanks flogging all the first-year Collegers in one day; of Cyril himself beaten several times a day, yet, having graduated from being bullied to being a bully, he ended as the only "tug" in "Pop"—the Eton Society, whose privileges include colored waistcoats and walking arm-in-arm.

Love and hate—and the "sado-masochismo" as the Spanish call it, that is both—fill his whole life from the age of five onwards. Then, his relations with his dog and cat were sadistic; those with the pale cones of the silver fir and gummy blue cups of the eucalyptus were esthetic. At seven he first fell in love, and, commenting, says that "life without love is an operation without an anesthetic."

Already at St. Wulfric's, to which he was sent at the age of nine (I have yet to meet, in life or in literature, a single Englishman who did not abhor his preparatory school) where he became head of the sixth but not captain of the school: "I occupied," he says, "the position I occupied in after life, that of the intellectual who is never given a job, because he is brilliant but unsound." These very same words were applied to Mr. Churchill by the huge majority of the Conservative party as late as 1938.

The masochist, he writes in "The Condemned Playground," is often one who was exposed to too many dangers in childhood, such as loneliness and the dark," and who, unable to defend himself, made use of others to protect him." Again, he says, "masochism is a process of ridding oneself of the fear of death by counterfeiting the sensation . . . there is even an element of courage in masochism, which we see in the tendency to embrace the fear of destruction in the hope that destruction will be evaded. Also animals try to avoid punishment, he says, "by a kind of anticipatory acceptance of it."

"The problem of the next ten years," he wrote in "Enemies of Promise," "is: 1. To get enough to eat. 2. Not to get killed." He has one ambition—to write a book that will hold good for ten years after. And, for him, there are only two kinds of great writers—those who swallow life whole, like Shakespeare, Goethe, Tolstoy, and those who suffer it wholly, like Swift and Baudelaire, the "great, lonely, formal artists, who spit in the eye of their century."

It is in the latter company that Mr. Connolly finds himself comfortable, and at ease.

More Books of the Week

Oscar Wilde. Hesketh Pearson. Harper. \$3.75.

"I TOLD him I did not believe Mr. Pearson, his biographer, knew him at all, and I wondered openly if he himself, Mr. Shaw, knew the true extent of his greatness." Thus Trapeze Saroyan in the *New Republic* for July 22, 1946. Willie has something there, and it applies even more to Mr. Pearson's current life of Oscar Wilde. Not that he has written a bad book, but rather that, convinced of his own wonderful powers of perception and of his mastery of truth, Mr. Pearson has ended up with a book which might have been good had it only been less pretentious. Yet after all we should not be ungrateful: "Oscar Wilde, His Life and Wit," is incomparably the best study of this extraordinary creature yet published, and its jejune psychological probing is forgivable for the sake of its conscientious garnering of the facts in the case. Heaven knows this is no cinch. When a man has had Frank Harris invent a fake life of him for posterity, getting at what really happened is quite literally a labor of Hercules.

In these 300 pages, charmingly illustrated with the faces of the dead, the outer events of Wilde's 44 years on this spinning globe are as fully recounted as they need be. Not only the events, but great hunks of the conversation. And the events possess enough verve, the conversation enough wit to make a highly entertaining book, despite Mr. Pearson's owlish style and noisome *obiter dicta*. The shortness of Wilde's life in the light of the dent he made on the world's literary history is, in itself, sufficient to demonstrate the characteristic which seems to me most vividly to emerge from this volume, if not at all from the Wilde legend: an almost incredible vitality. Oscar's father was himself quite a vital gentleman, having done his full part to stimulate the Irish birthrate, much of this activity having been conducted strictly out of wedlock. Yet as is often the case with people born to vitality, Wilde had an immense capacity for sloth. The point is that he did not need really to exert himself in order to effect his object. At school he was an incorrigible loafer, and came off with all the prizes he wanted. In London he was constantly broke, yet could turn himself half-heartedly to work and end up with all the money he needed—which even by the gaudiest of modern standards was a lot. Especially since he was constantly handing out checks to needy friends in fifty and hundred pound denominations. The estheticism which he flaunted in the face of a thoroughly solid Victorian England—partly for reasons of publicity and partly for reasons far deeper—naturally led the manly to suspect him of being a weakling. Mr. Pearson has most thoroughly and adequately disposed of that notion, should it by chance linger. Wilde could physically discomfit any of his contemporaries whenever those contemporaries were foolish enough to invite such a visitation. He outdrank Rocky Mountain miners and outpoked those who thought he had never heard of the game. His prowess in less morally admirable feats aroused the envy of those who sought to prove him something less than a man.

But no less a sign of Wilde's vitality was his extraordinary gift at conversation. By no means was he a monologist. His art in its very essence depended upon other players returning the ball. Yet the evidence is overwhelming that in every circle where he happened to find

himself, his was the dominant mind and at the same time the delight of the company. Indeed it is a commonplace that almost everything he wrote was built up out of what he had previously said on some occasion or other, and it is equally certain that the stories he never wrote were greater artistic triumphs than anything he left to posterity.

Of course one cannot write about Oscar Wilde in a moral vacuum. It would be ridiculous nonsense to pretend that by any standards whatever he lived a truly moral life. Yet at the same time it must be granted that he lived an honest and even an honorable life, since his transgressions against the moral code were not against a code he accepted and since his goodness in every connection other than that of sex seems to have been transparently obvious to everyone who knew him at all intimately. It was, if you like, an easy sort of goodness, since the man was naturally generous. And yet, given his position and given the tragedy which crushed his later days, this generosity simply cannot always have been easy. His very genuine charity toward other men came to be almost heroic. It should do much to compensate for the rest.

It is my own guess that Oscar Wilde has psychologically a great deal in common with such a man as Léon Bloy. Both were in violent rebellion against the deadening spiritual climate of a century whose entire tone had been set by a peculiar blend of middle class sanctimoniousness and mediocrity. Outwardly these two men seem very different, perhaps, but the more one ponders upon them, the more these differences become accidental. In his revolt, Léon Bloy took the line of excoriating with sulphuric invective everything and every person who represented the least concession to the spirit of his age, all this done from the point of view of deep Christian conviction, of evangelical fury against the Pharisees who had captured so vast an area of Christendom. Wilde, though never long subjected as far as one can see to the least of truly Christian influences, instinctively realized that the world in which he lived was not truly Christian. His strategy was to insist on beauty when the world he knew to be rotten was insisting on what it called goodness (which, formally, often bore a relation to real goodness) and on its ultimate god, respectability. It did not occur to him in any pondered way that Christianity — in its genuine sense — was a valid weapon against Phariseism, and hence he often confounded the genuine with the fake, going so far as to deny in substance the validity of all accepted moral codes. One of the witticisms of his last days seems to me a key to his soul: "I cannot stand Christians because they are never Catholics, and I cannot stand Catholics because they are never Christians — otherwise I am at one with the Invisible Church." If you subtract from this its Irishness — and its Englishness — you will have left something Léon Bloy himself deeply thought and felt.

And hence I think it far less difficult to account for Wilde's having played with the notion of becoming a Catholic while still an undergraduate (at the instance of the late Abbot Hunter Blair) or to account for the extraordinary fashion in which he chose to enter the Church before his death: "He made me promise to bring a priest when he was no longer in a fit condition to shock one, which I did." Mr. Pearson, whose entire analysis of Wilde's character seems to lie in assimilating him to an actor playing a part, gravely assures us that his conversion was, "like all his gestures, perfectly sincere at the moment

Horizon

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it was made." I suspect that it came from an almost intuitive ultimate feeling that his weapon against the nineteenth century had been the wrong weapon, or at least a weapon useful only after it had been sharpened against the whetstone of the Gospels.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE.

Two Worlds. William B. Ziff. Harper. \$3.00.

THIS gloomy and rambling discussion of current and near-future power politics is brought up short at the end by a formula which ought to set a lot of people by the ears. Mr. Ziff thinks that there is no effective way of preventing continuing Russian expansion; therefore Americans should expect and accept it. But every Russian move should be countered by an American absorption of territory until the happy day when there are literally only two worlds. And, by the way, "We could settle the Argentine question with a minimum of effort by sending a few airplane carriers to the mouth of the Rio Plata, where an expeditious end would be placed to both Perón and his pretensions." Mr. Ziff not only finds the worst of all possible worlds about him but looks forward to a day when there will be two of them, even worse.

A House in the Uplands. Erskine Caldwell. Duell. \$2.50.

MR. CALDWELL'S specialty, as is well known, lies in character studies of thoroughly unpleasant inhabitants of the remoter backwaters of the South. He is perhaps as skilled as any American writer in creating this morose and fetid atmosphere, and his skill deserves full credit.

"A House in the Uplands" is concentrated upon the action of a few days in the lives of its principal characters. Grady Dunbar is the played-out scion of a played-out line, and apart from an amiable streak of tenderness for some of the women he frequents, he is as nasty a compound of pride, stupidity and weakness as may readily be found. He is married to a sweet and rather innocent girl, Lucy-anne. Mr. Caldwell observes an almost classical unity of time, place and action, and in rapid succession disposes of Grady, his mother, and the problems they occasion, including the problem of the downtrodden Negro. But again it is only fair to insist that Mr. Caldwell is awfully good at this game, however little one may eventually think it is worth playing.

CONTRIBUTORS

Don Luigi STURZO, one of the founders of the Partito Popolare and author of many distinguished books, is now planning an early return to Italy.

J. L. TELLER is New York chief of the official Zionist Falcor News Agency.

John Porter HEYMANN is a Hyannis, Mass., poet.

Euphemia Van Rensselaer WYATT is the drama critic of the *Catholic World*.

Paul ROSENFELD suddenly and tragically died two days after completing the appreciation of his friend Albert Stieglitz we are proud to publish in this issue. Mr. Rosenfeld has for more than thirty years occupied a distinguished position in New York's critical world, not very different in its motives and its acts from that which he attributes with so much warmth to Mr. Stieglitz.

David BURNHAM has written three novels and many short stories; he is recently home from the Army.

Anne FREMANTLE is an English critic and writer at present living in New York, N. Y.